

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Memorandum

TO : James Turner

DATE: 11-15-65

FROM : Maureen McGrath

SUBJECT: Examination of DJ Files on Klan in Alabama

I have examined the DJ files on the United Klans of America (the organization of Robert Shelton) in Alabama for the periods covering:

1. The Blue Flame incident
2. The sending of guns to Selma
3. The beating of the two civil rights sympathizers ordered by Shelton
4. The Anniston smoke bombing.

These incidents are covered in Sections 11 through 20 in the DJ series, reports of the Bureau dated March 18, 1964 through May 10, 1965.

I could find no additional information on the above incidents, other than what had been pulled together previously for the grand jury hearings last March and April.

The attached chronology lists the few incidents in which any of the defendants or their cohorts were involved. It contains everything in the files, except their attendance at regular meetings or rallies, and other unrelated mentions of their names.

I am now examining the files for the time around the 1961 bus burnings in order to supplement the work done on it by Mr. Ackerman. I will also examine the remainder of the DJ files (part!) and send you a chronology on it (Sections 1 through 10 and 21 through 39). We are also compiling a list of the Klan rallies and meetings at which the three defendants were in attendance since the shooting.

We plan to make xerox copies of the reports with significant information for your use.

Attachment

PARTIAL CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS INVOLVING DEFENDANTS, ETAL.

<u>Date of Incident</u>	<u>Incident</u>	<u>Date of Report</u>
1960, 8-7	Chief of Police Olen Bragg, Irondale, communicated with J. Crawford, T. Rowe and Rbt. Thomas re racial and bootlegging difficulties; offered police cooperation on any Klan action.	9-29-64 4-2-65
9-11-60	Meeting at R. Thomas' to make plans to beat Negro known to be riding Trailways bus through state. Made arrangements with bus company to stop bus on rural road, and beat Negro, with assistance of Klansmen who would be riding bus. Bus company allegedly offered to pay for this service.	9-19-60
4-6-61	J. E. Faulkner and 14 other unidentified members of K #13 visited and attempted to harass white man near Odenville who had Negro woman and child living in his home; got man outside, his wife appeared, shot at group who fled.	4-2-65
3-26-64	T. Rowe, G. Reeves, and others given patrol assignments for Billy Graham rally Easter Sunday to watch and take action if necessary in this mixed meeting; no details.	4-1-65 4-2-65
4-64	R. Thomas received information that race mixing, dating, going on in Shannon Mines area; group from K #13 instructed to investigate; group armed.	10-28-64
4-18-64	Group from K #13 went armed to Mines, stayed out there from 11:00 pm to 5:00 am; no mixed group appeared. Klansmen included R. Tidwell, C. Henson, J. Hall, R. Keith.	4-1-65
5-14-64	T. Rowe, G. Reeves and five others from K #13 went to B'ham to do some "missionary work" at integrated ball game; no details.	4-1-65
6-22-64	Crossburning at Selma church by Montgomery Klansmen; ordered by Shelton, group of burners included R. Roton.	9-29-64 4-2-65
7-4,5,6-64	R. Roton arrested in vicinity of two newly-integrated theaters in Montgomery; was part of group of Klansmen in area; group returned to theater area next day; third day went to Negro jamboree, Montgomery; no details.	
9-3-64	Regular K #13 meeting; many weapons observed.	10-28-64
9-5, 9-6-64	Imperial Klansmen, B'ham; during meetings rifles sold by R. Tidwell, K #13.	9-11-64

9-12-64	Public rally, Montgomery	9-24-64
9-26, 9-27, 9-30-64	Blue Flame incidents	9-29-64 10-2-64 4-2-65 4-22-65
10-29-64	C. Henson, T. Rowe, G. Reeves bought three guns, B'ham.	10-28-64
10-29-64	Regular meeting of K #13; R. Thomas said he had received info that there would be outbreaks of violence on election night; requested all members of K #13 to meet at his house that night in case they would be called upon to "quell disturbances."	11-17-64
11-15-64	R. Thomas spoke at Gadsden Klavern meeting	11-21-64
11-14-64	E. Thomas spoke at Ft. Payne Klavern meeting	11-21-64
11-21-64 11-22-64	Creel, G. Thomas, E. Rowe, Wilkinson, M. Murphy attended National Klan convention, Jacksonville, Fla; met and made plans to deal with splinter Klan group threat should it arise; all armed; dynamite bombs observed in Murphy's rooms.	11-24-64 2-26-65
12-64	Acquisition of large supply of weapons by members of K #13.	1-28-65
Late, 1964	R. Roton wanted by Klan in Montgomery to help organize a commando squad to be well armed for Tuskegee. Nothing expected to come from it.	11-30-64
1-14-65	K #13 developed plans to kill Negro rape attempters in lovers lane by dressing as couples and surprising them.	
1-22-65	Bessemer Klaners plan to join Auxiliary Police in Hueytown; to form mounted posse in Bessemer.	
2-4-65	L. Rutherford, T. Rowe and one other requested by Creel to survey Smith and Gaston Funeral Home to determine if arsenal was being developed there by Negroes; if so, some positive action would have to be taken.	4-2-65
3-18-65	Shelton, R. Thomas, G. Rowe, M. Murphy met at Northport Ala, to discuss March on Montgomery.	7-23-65
'0-65	Shelton plea to Creel and Murphy to keep Klan away from March; Creel and Murphy say	

	their boys want some action	3-22-65
3-7-65	Plans discussed in Tuscaloosa Klavern to machine-gun marchers, 3-21-65 enroute to Montgomery.	3-22-65
3-21-65	Klan motorcade, Montgomery; cars observed: L. Rutherford, M. Murphy, R. Creel, E. Thomas, R. Roton.	3-22-65 3-24-65
?	Holt, G. Reeves, Shelton, et al, held meeting at Ala. Highway Patrol Headquarters.	3-24-65
3-12-65	G. Thomas, statement at K meeting, followed by discussion of how to handle civil rights workers and demonstrators if they come to Bessemer: "If those beatniks and queers come to Bessemer, a great many of them will never leave."	3-27-65
<u>NOTE:</u> Events during March and surrounding shooting of Mrs. Liuzzo are not included in these files.		
4-4-65	State meeting of K's at Bessemer, R. Creel led discussion of fund for accused killers and of threatening letter received by Eaton.	4-9-65
4-10-65	K #13 public rally; at meeting just before this rally, bomb tactics for dealing with demonstrators was discussed by R. Thomas.	4-13-65 4-14-65
4-17-65	Three defendants, in company of Murphy and Shelton, introduced at Tuscaloosa rally.	7-23-65
5-1-65	Three defendants, with Creel, introduced at Bladen Springs, Ala., rally.	5-4-65
5-15-65 5-16-65	Three defendants at rallies in North Carolina	7-23-65
<u>Out of order:</u>		
2-8, 2-9-64	Arrangements by T. Rowe to give blasting caps to Holt, Creel told Rowe to give them to "Big John" from Bessemer (John Burnett), who in turn passed them along to Klaner from Ga.	3-24-65 4-2-65

ALSO: In the Blue Flame reports, we have references to an earlier attack by Bessemer Klansmen on Negroes at a Bessemer carnival, done according to a preplanned schedule. I am checking this out now.